



**SPECIAL  
ISSUE**

No. 10017 Rs 70

# MORE TALES FROM THE JATAKAS



## **MORE TALES FROM THE JATAKAS**

All living creatures die to be born again, according to Hindu belief. Legend has it that several lifetimes as a Bodhisattva went into the making of the Buddha, the enlightened one.

The Bodhisattva came in many forms—man, monkey, deer, elephant, lion. Whatever his mortal frame, he spread the message of justice and wisdom, tempered with compassion. This wisdom of right thinking and right living is preserved in the Jataka Tales.

We cannot assign a definite date to the Jataka Tales. Taking into account archaeological and literary evidence, it appears that they were compiled between 300 B. C. and A. D. 500. They give us invaluable information about ancient Indian civilization, culture and thought.

According to Matha Ummagga Jataka, the Bodhisattva was once born as Aushadha Kumar, the son of Seth Shrivardhana of Yavamajjhaka.

The first two tales in this special issue recount the incidents in the life of Aushadha Kumar. The third tale is about the Queen of Mithila. She takes refuge in Kalachampa after her husband is killed in battle, and grooms her son to be a prince.

*Editor : Anant Pai -*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Script</i>	<i>Illustrations</i>
<b>Battle of Wits</b>	Yagya Sharma	Ram Waterkar
<b>The Deadly Feast</b>	Yagya Sharma	Ram Waterkar
<b>The Hidden Treasure</b>	Meera Ugra	M. N. Nangare

*Editor : Anant Pai*

## Battle of Wits



LONG LONG AGO MITHILA WAS RULED BY A KING NAMED VAIDEHA. ONE NIGHT HE HAD A STRANGE DREAM. FOUR PILLARS AS HIGH AS THE WALLS OF HIS FORT WERE BURNING BRIGHTLY IN THE COURTYARD OF HIS PALACE.

SUDDENLY A TINY FLAME APPEARED AMIDST THE BURNING PILLARS AND...



... GREW TALLER AND TALLER TILL IT DWARFED THEM, THE FORT, THE PALACE AND ALL.



THE KING WOKE UP TREMBLING.



OH GOD!  
WHAT A  
DREAM!

THE NEXT MORNING HE CONSULTED SENAK, PUKKUS, KAYIND AND DEVIND, THE FOUR PANDITS OF HIS COURT.



SENAK,  
WHAT DOES  
MY DREAM  
SIGNIFY?

ONLY GOOD,  
MAHARAJ.

THE FOUR BURNING  
DILLARS YOU SAW IN  
YOUR DREAM  
REPRESENT PUKKUS,  
KAYIND, DEVIND AND  
ME. AND...



... THE BRIGHT  
FLAME FORETELLS  
THE ADVENT OF A  
GREAT SOUL WHOSE  
WISDOM WILL  
SURPASS OUR  
COMBINED  
KNOWLEDGE.



WHEN WILL THIS  
GREAT SOUL BE  
BORN?

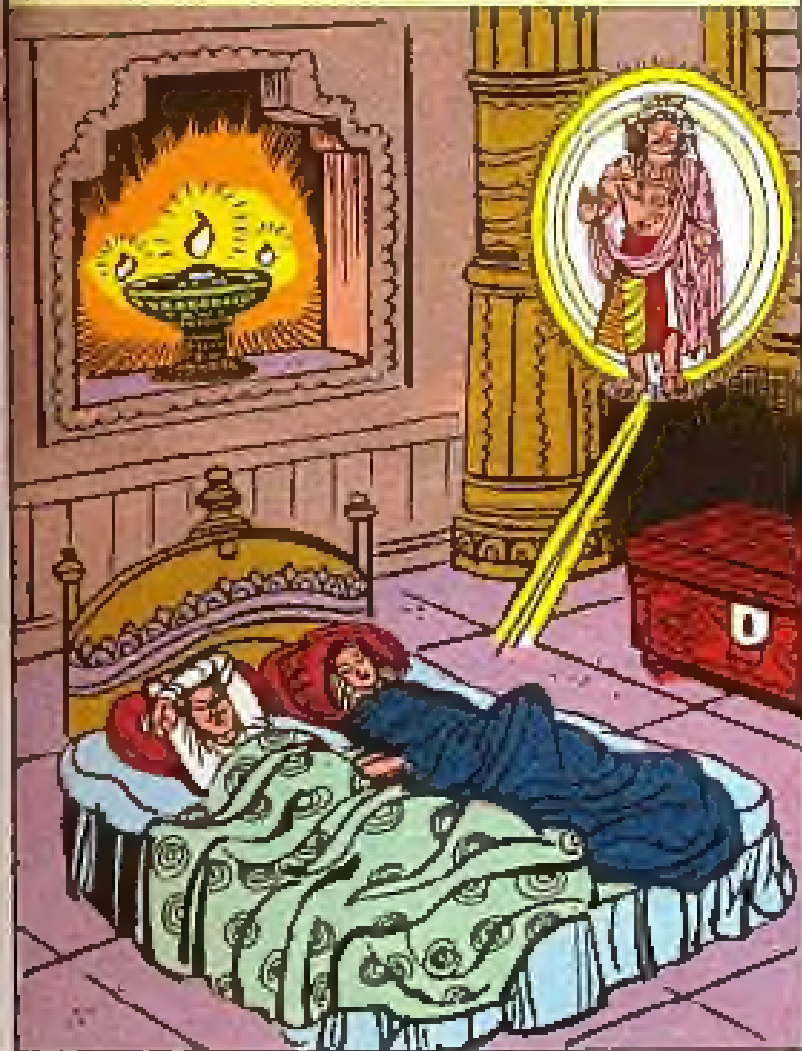


YOUR DREAM  
INDICATES THAT HE  
ENTERED THE  
WOMB OF A NOBLE  
MOTHER LAST  
NIGHT.





SENAR WAS RIGHT. THE BOODHISATVA\* HAD ENTERED THE WOMB OF SUMANA DEVI, WIFE OF SHRIVARDHANA, A WEALTHY RESIDENT OF YAVANA-JHAKA VILLAGE.



TEN MONTHS LATER, SUMANA DEVI GAVE BIRTH TO A RADIANT SON.



SUDDENLY, THE NEWBORN BABY  
SPOKE IN A CLEAR, MELODIOUS VOICE.

THIS PIECE  
OF WOOD  
POSSESSES  
MYSTERIOUS  
POWERS OF  
HEALING.



FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, BETH SHRIYARDHANA HAD  
BEEN SUFFERING FROM FREQUENT BOUTS OF  
HEADACHE.

THE NEXT TIME  
I HAVE A  
HEADACHE I'LL  
TRY THIS  
OUT.



THE VERY NEXT DAY HE HAD ONE. HE  
QUICKLY BROUGHT OUT THE PIECE OF  
WOOD, RUBBED IT ON A GRINDING-STONE...



...AND APPLIED THE PASTE TO HIS FOREHEAD.  
AND LO!

IT'S GONE!  
MY HEADACHE  
HAS GONE!



I'LL MIX THIS  
IN WATER AND  
DISTRIBUTE THE  
MIXTURE TO THE  
AILING.

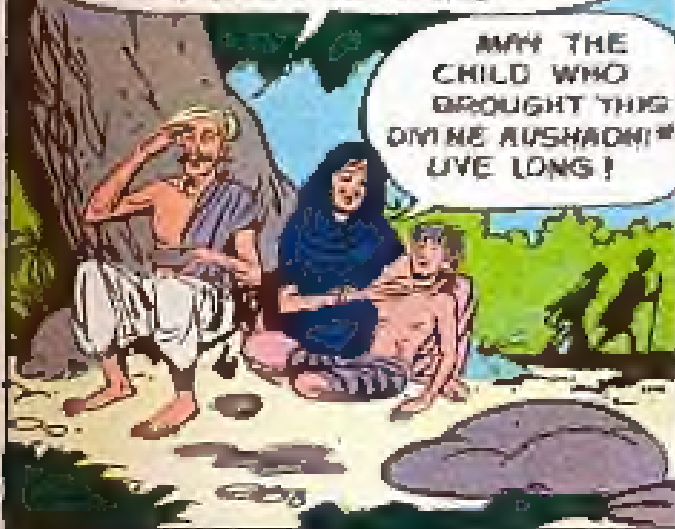


FARE OF THE HERB SPREAD, AND AILING PEOPLE FROM NEAR AND FAR FLOCKED TO SHRIVARDHANA'S HOUSE.



THE PAIN AND AGONY THAT TORTURED ME FOR FIVE LONG YEARS VANISHES WITH JUST ONE DOSE OF MEDICINE! I MUST BE DREAMING.

MAY THE CHILD WHO BROUGHT THIS DIVINE AUSHADHI\* LIVE LONG!



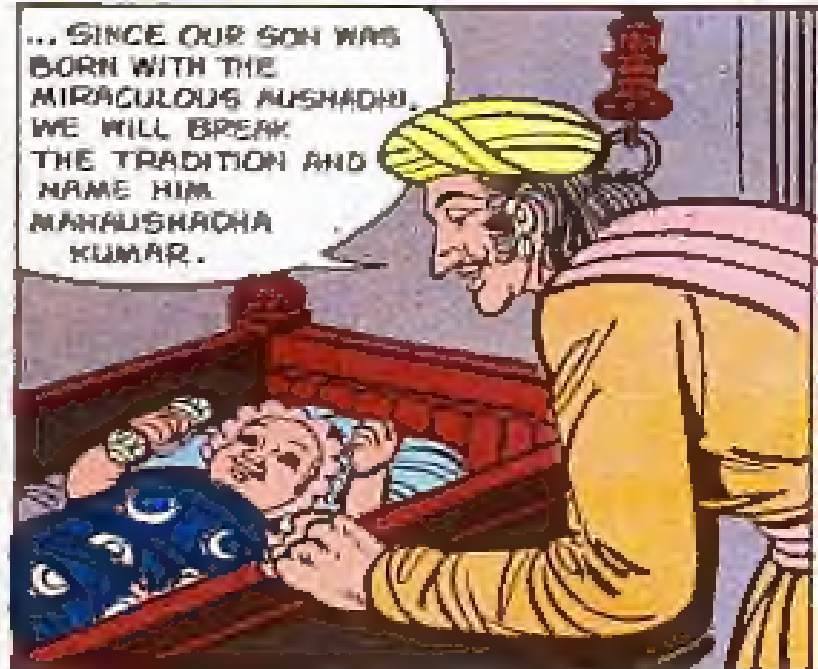
WHEN THE CHILD HAD TO BE NAMED, SHRIVARDHANA MADE A DECISION.



IT IS A TRADITION IN OUR FAMILY FOR THE ELDEST SON TO BE NAMED AFTER HIS GRANDFATHER, BUT...



... SINCE OUR SON WAS BORN WITH THE MIRACULOUS AUSHADHI, WE WILL BREAK THE TRADITION AND NAME HIM MAHAUSHADHA KUMAR.





MARALUSHADHA KUMAR GREW UP HAPPILY IN THE COMPANY OF THE CHILDREN OF HIS VILLAGE. BUT HE WAS FAR MORE INTELLIGENT AND KNOWLEDGEABLE THAN ANY OF THEM. ONE DAY, WHEN HE WAS BARELY SEVEN YEARS OLD—

AUSHADHA, THE STREETS ARE TOO CROWDED. HOW CAN WE PLAY HERE? LET'S GO INDOORS.

BUT THE RAINS WILL SOON BE HERE AND THEN WE WILL HAVE TO PLAY INDOORS ALL THE TIME.

NO, WE WILL NOT. WE'LL HAVE A NEW TOWN WITH A SHELTERED PLAYGROUND. WE'LL ASK OUR PARENTS TO DONATE THE MONEY FOR IT.

AUSHADHA KUMAR ASSEMBLED ALL THE LOCAL ARTISANS AND SPOKE TO THEM OF HIS PLANS.

I WANT TO RAISE A TOWNSHIP WHICH WILL HAVE A STADIUM FOR CHILDREN, A HOME FOR HOMELESS WOMEN...

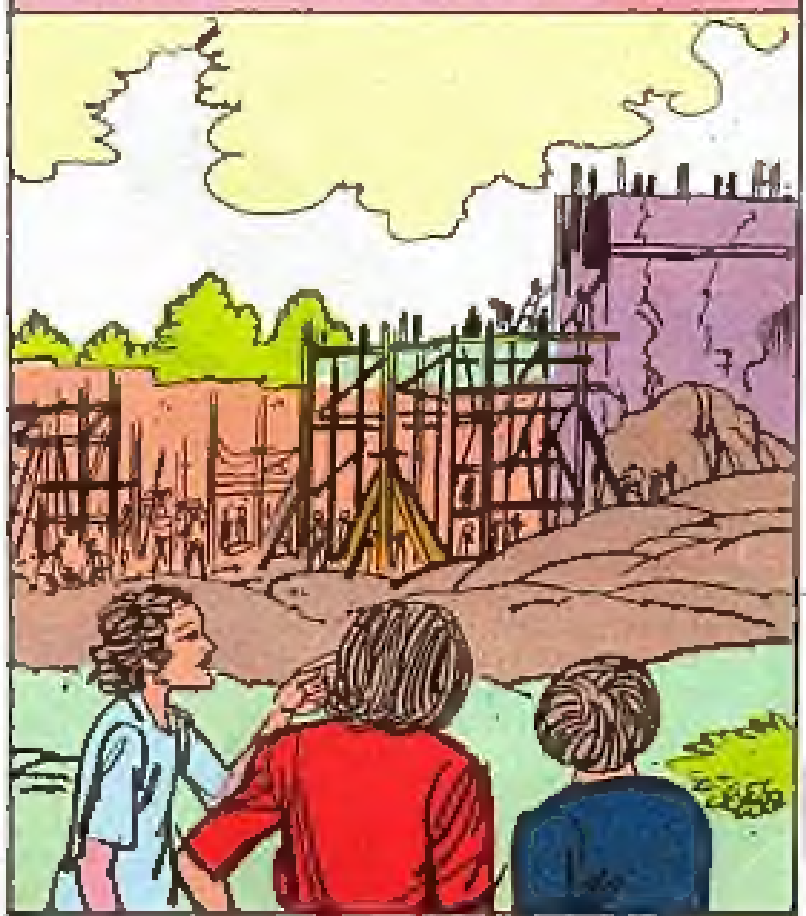
... REST-HOUSES FOR TRAVELLERS AND MENDICANTS, AND PUBLIC HALLS FOR PRAYERS AND SETTLING DISPUTES.



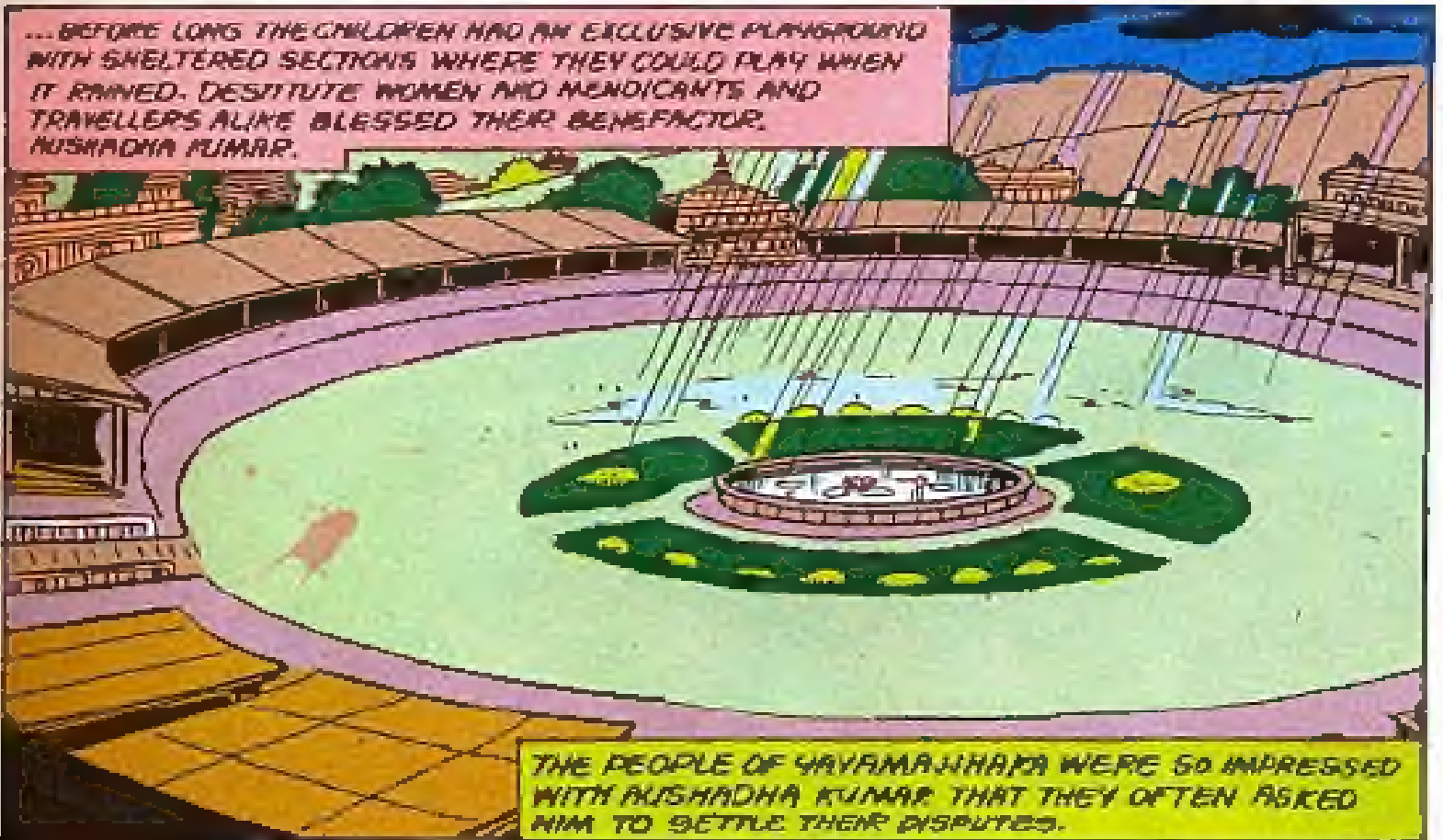
THE SIMPLE ARTISANS OF YAYAMAJHAKA VILLAGE WERE UNABLE TO VISUALIZE RUSHADHA KUMAR'S IDEAS. SO HE MADE A PLAN OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR THEM. AND...



...WORK BEGAN AND PROGRESSED QUICKLY YET SMOOTHLY UNDER HIS SUPERVISION. AND...

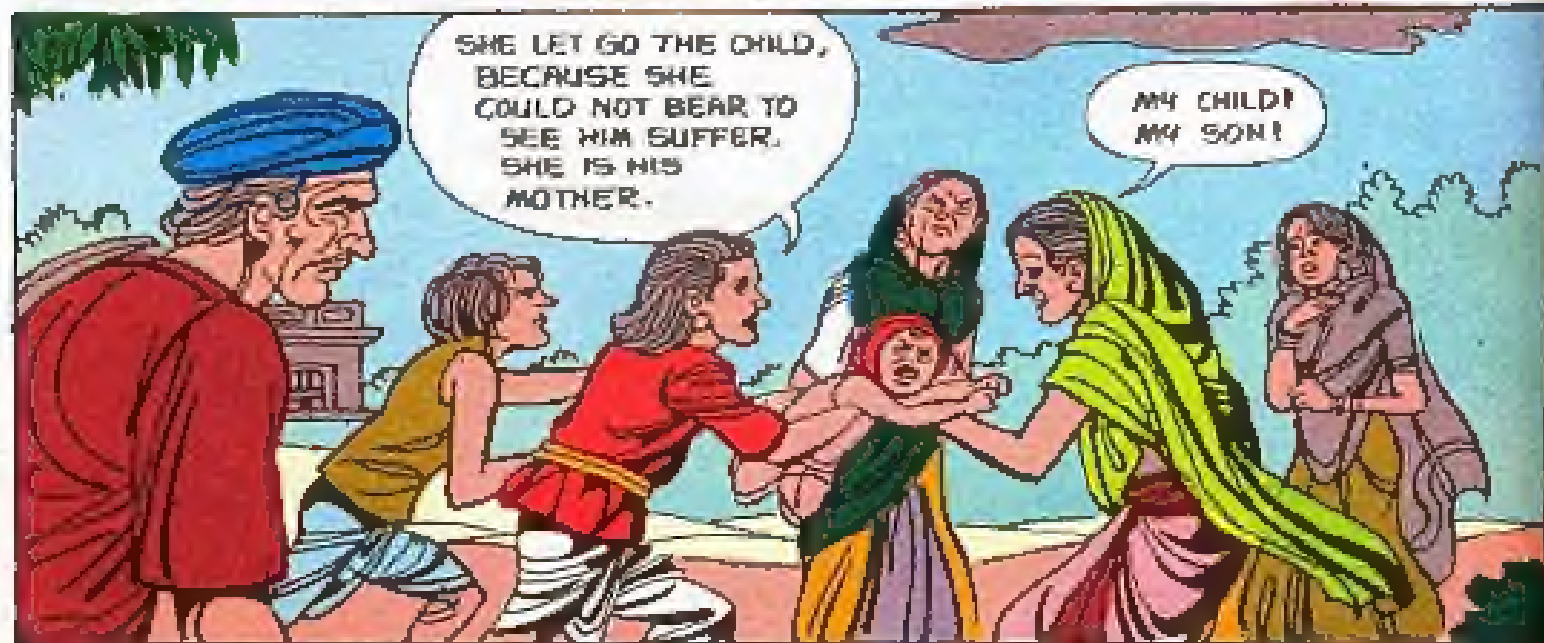


...BEFORE LONG THE CHILDREN HAD AN EXCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND WITH SHELTERED SECTIONS WHERE THEY COULD PLAY WHEN IT RAINED. DESITUTE WOMEN AND MENDICANTS AND TRAVELLERS ALIKE BLESSED THEIR BENEFACTOR, RUSHADHA KUMAR.

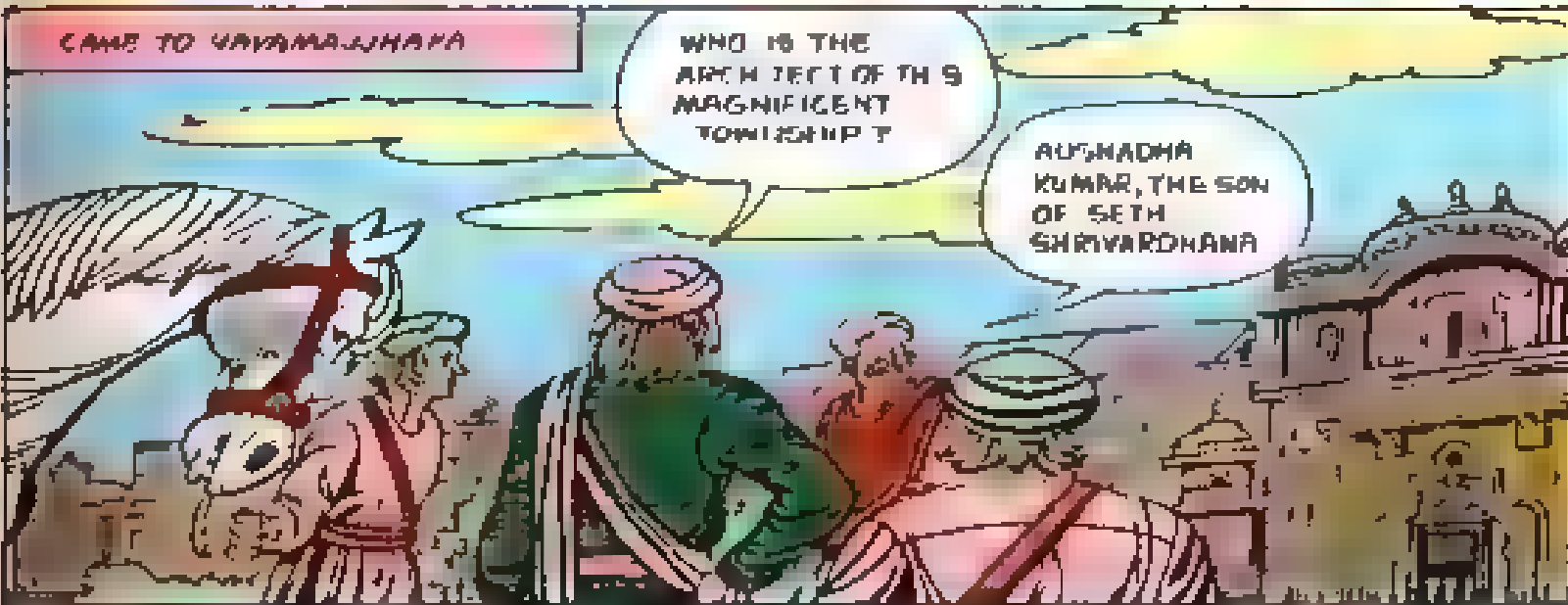


THE PEOPLE OF YAYAMAJHAKA WERE SO IMPRESSED WITH RUSHADHA KUMAR THAT THEY OFTEN ASKED HIM TO SETTLE THEIR DISPUTES.

ONE DAY —



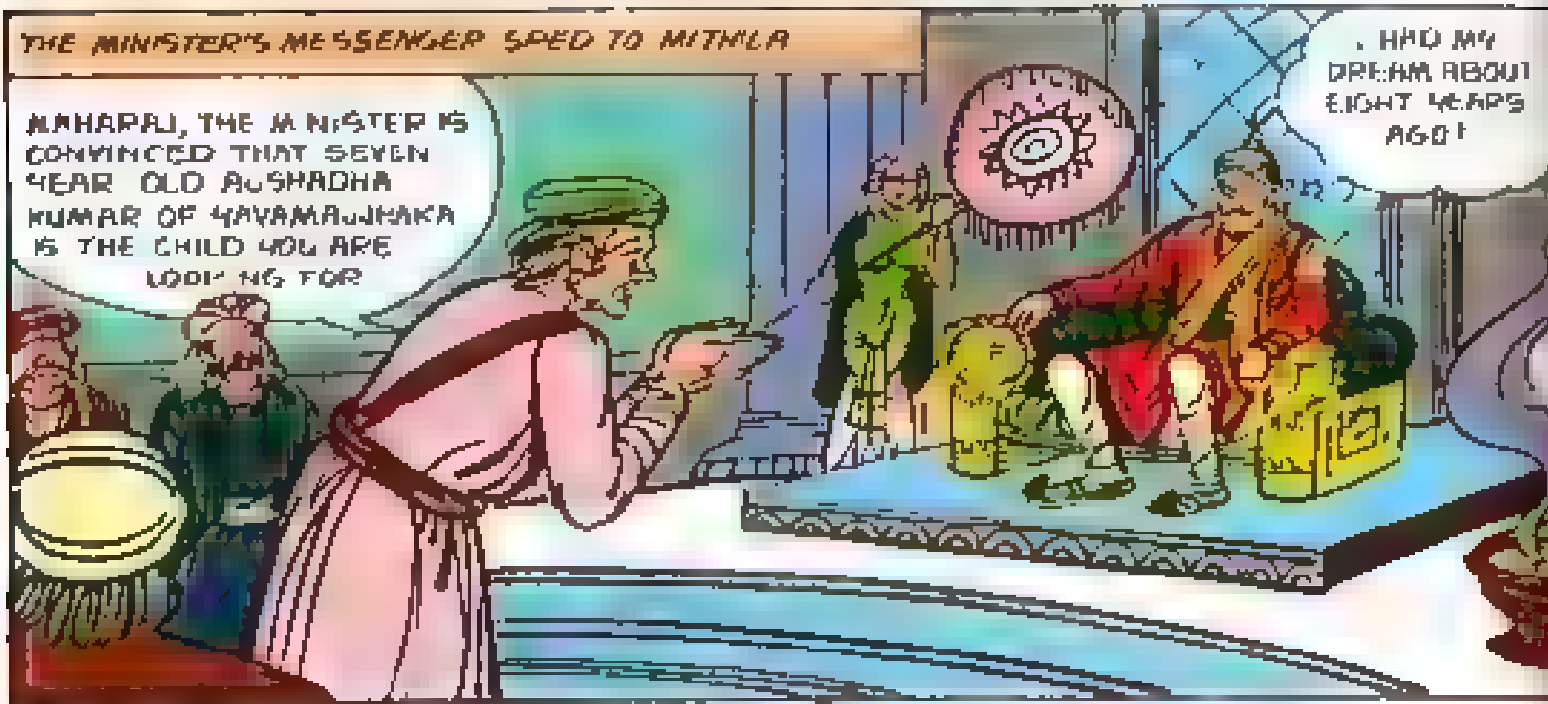
MEANWHILE IN SEVERAL YEARS HAD PASSED SINCE THE ADVENT OF THE GREAT PANDIT WAS PREDICTED, KING VAIDEHA DECIDED TO SEEK HIM OUT



THE MINISTER'S MESSENGER SPED TO MITHILA

MAHARAJ, THE MINISTER IS CONVINCED THAT SEVEN YEAR OLD AUSHADHA KUMAR OF KAVAMAJHAKA IS THE CHILD YOU ARE LOOKING FOR

I HAD MY DREAM ABOUT EIGHT YEARS AGO!



SENAR PANDIT THINK WE SHOULD INVITE AUSHADHA KUMAR TO MITHILA



WHAT IF HE IS THE SOUL WHOSE WISDOM WILL SUPPLY OUR KNOWLEDGE?



I AM NOT SO SURE, MAHARAJ PLANNING A TOWNSHIP IS NO CREATION OF WISDOM OR OF THE GREATNESS OF A SOUL

YOU ARE RIGHT



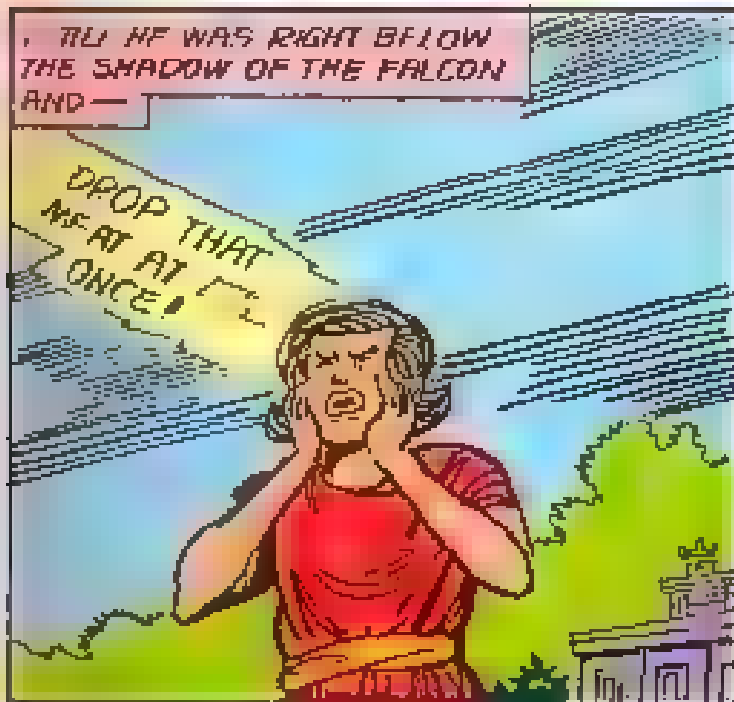
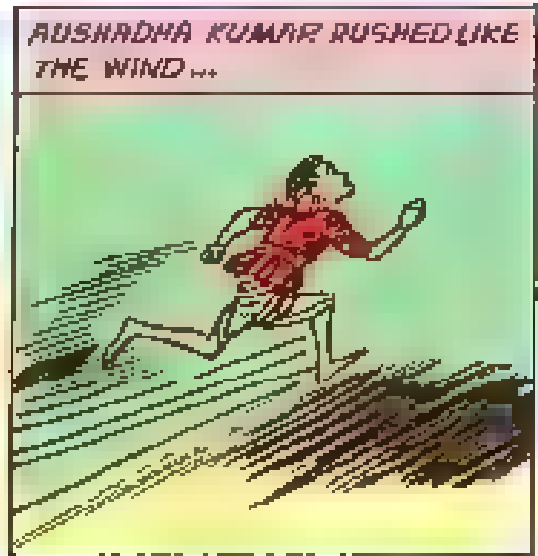
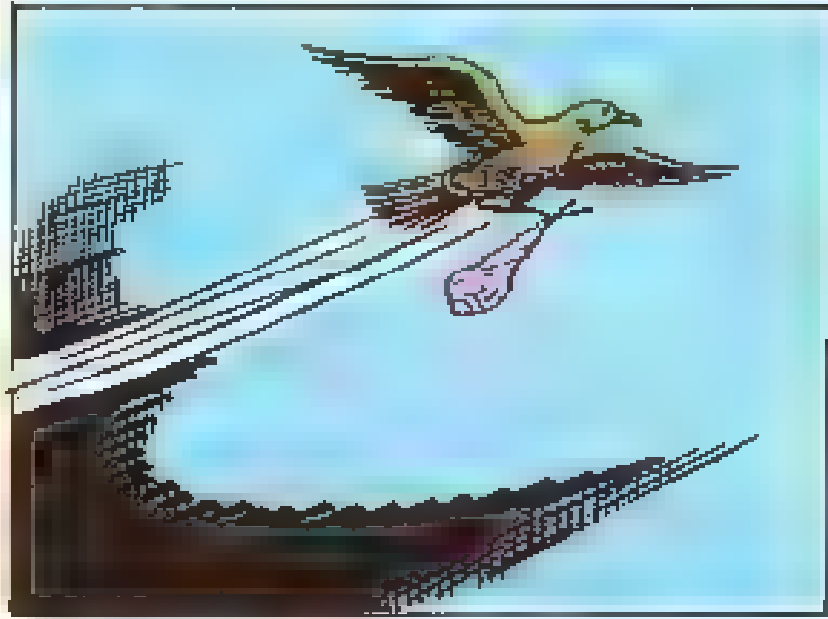
ASK THE MINISTER TO OBSERVE AUSHADHA KUMAR FOR A FEW MORE DAYS AND TO REPORT ANY THING UNUSUAL HE SEES

AS YOU COMMAND, MAHARAJ

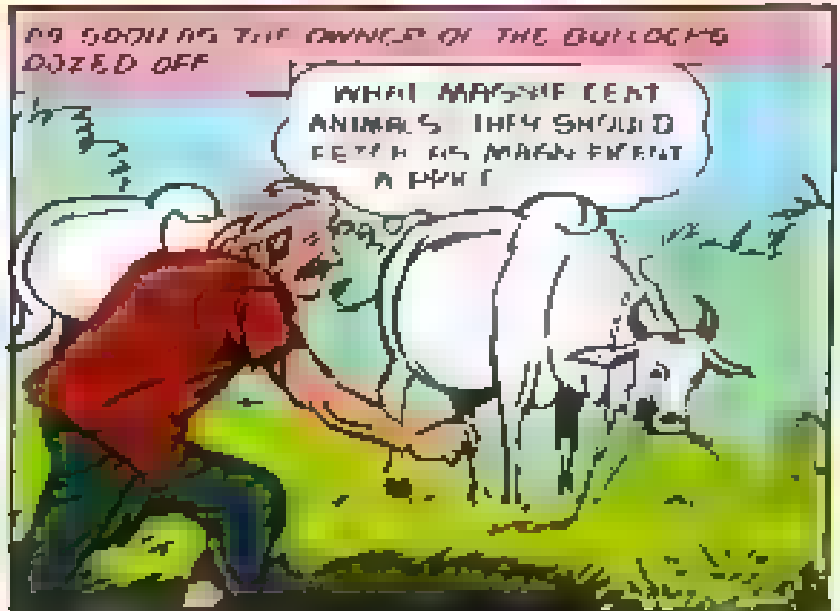
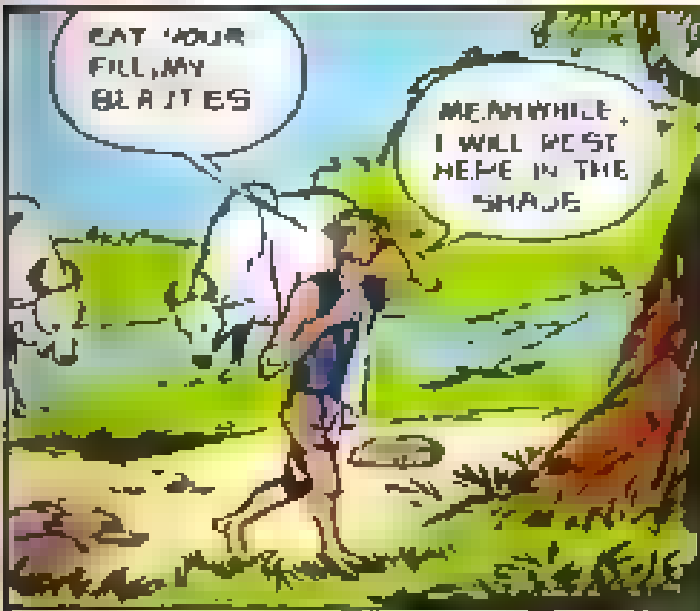


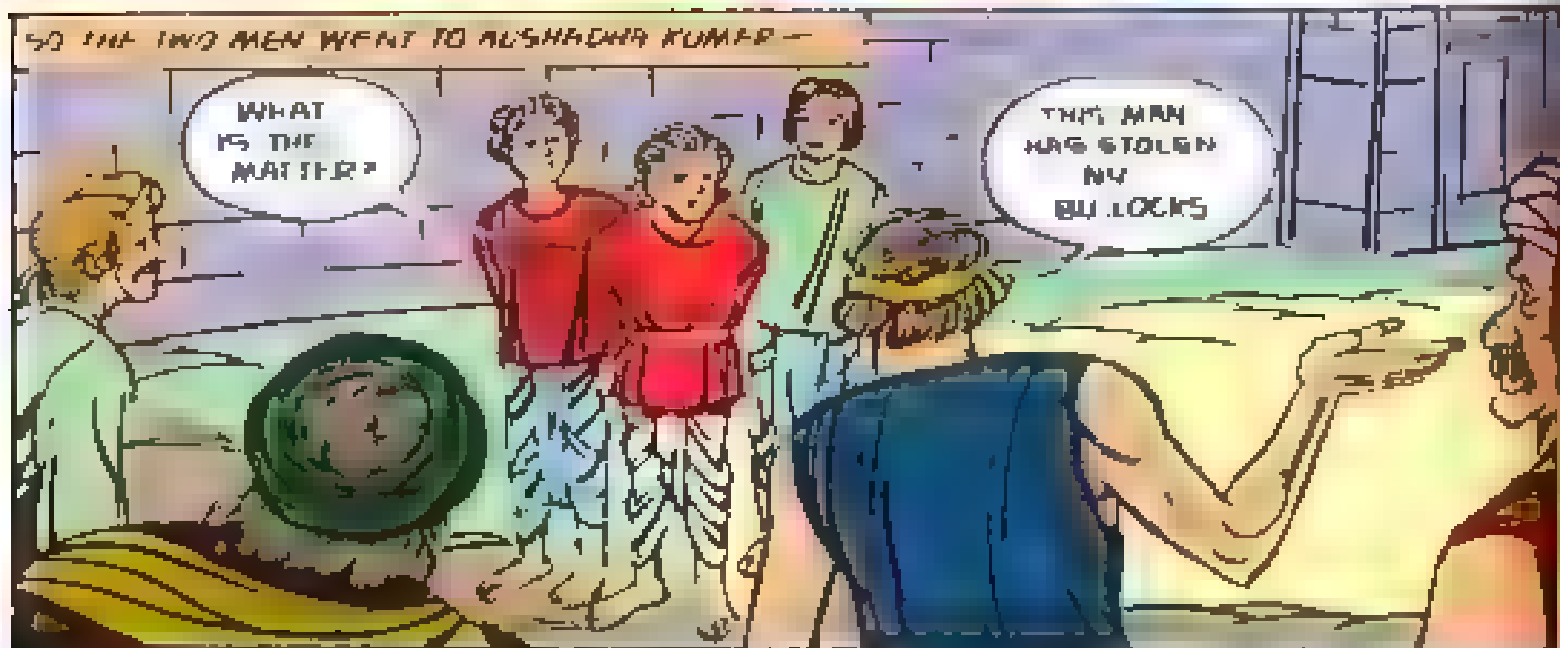


THE MINISTER DID AS HE WAS ORDERED. THEN ONE DAY —

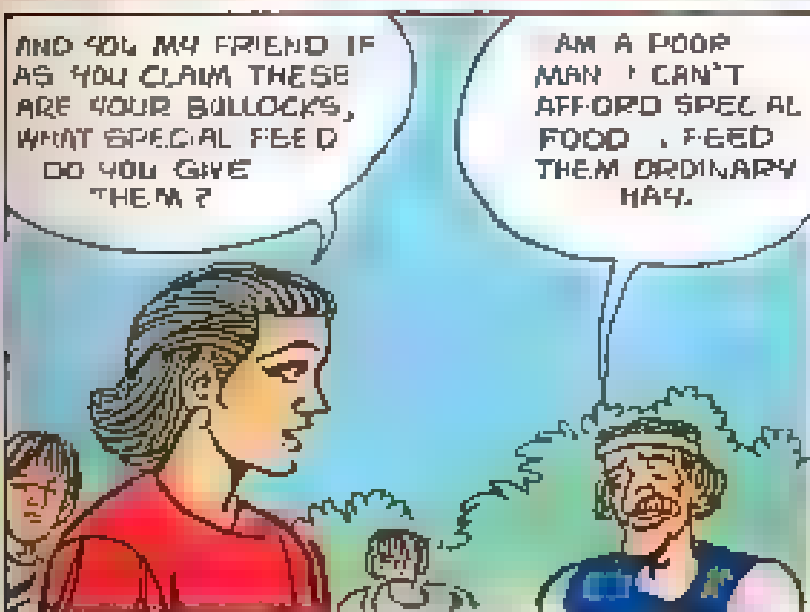
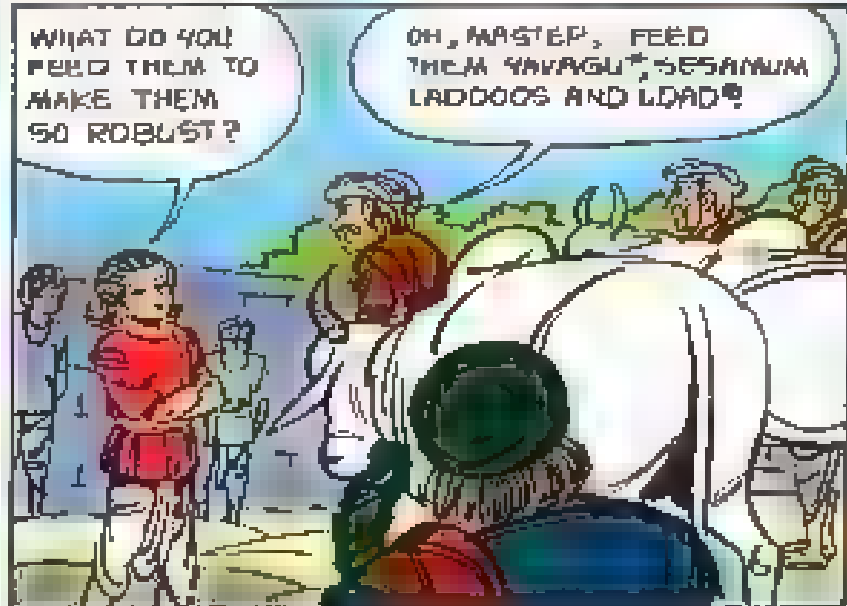
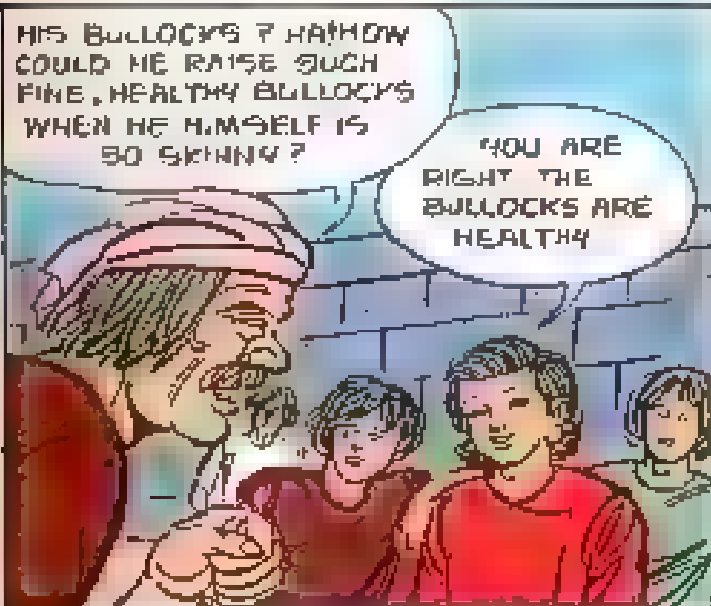












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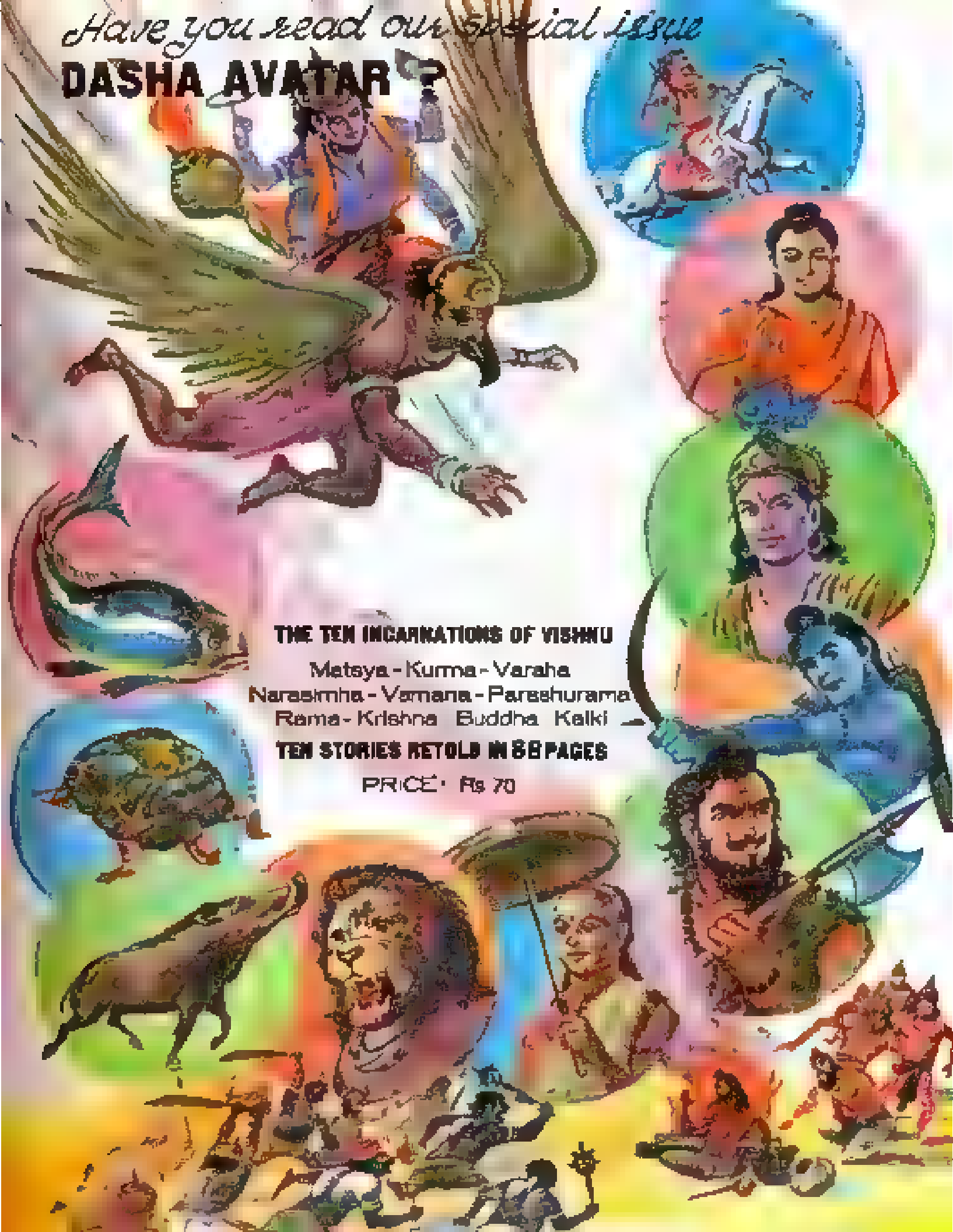
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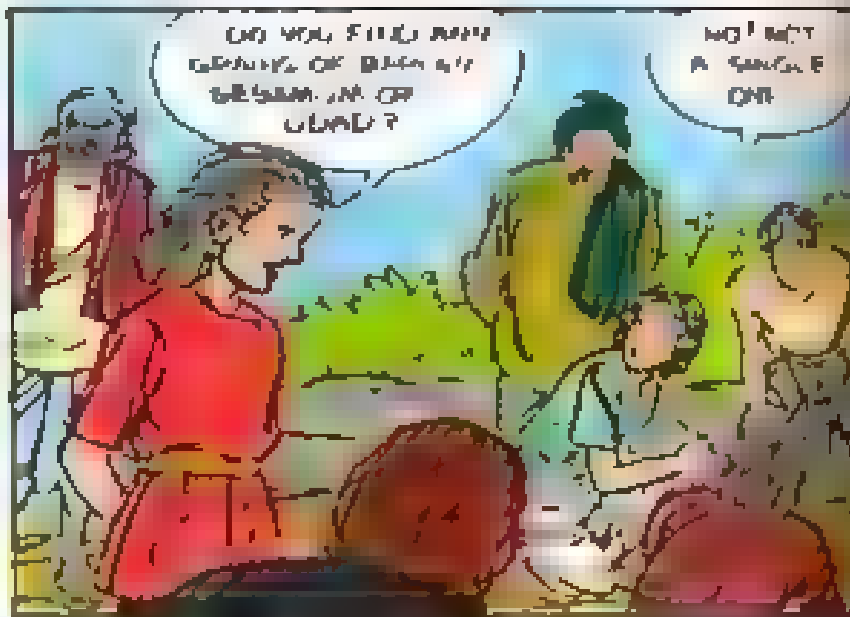
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THE PASTE OF MUSTARD LEAVES HAD THE  
DESIRED LAXATIVE EFFECT



ENRAGED BY SUCH KINK DECEIT, AU'S INDIAN  
KUMAR'S FRIENDS BEAT UP THE MAN



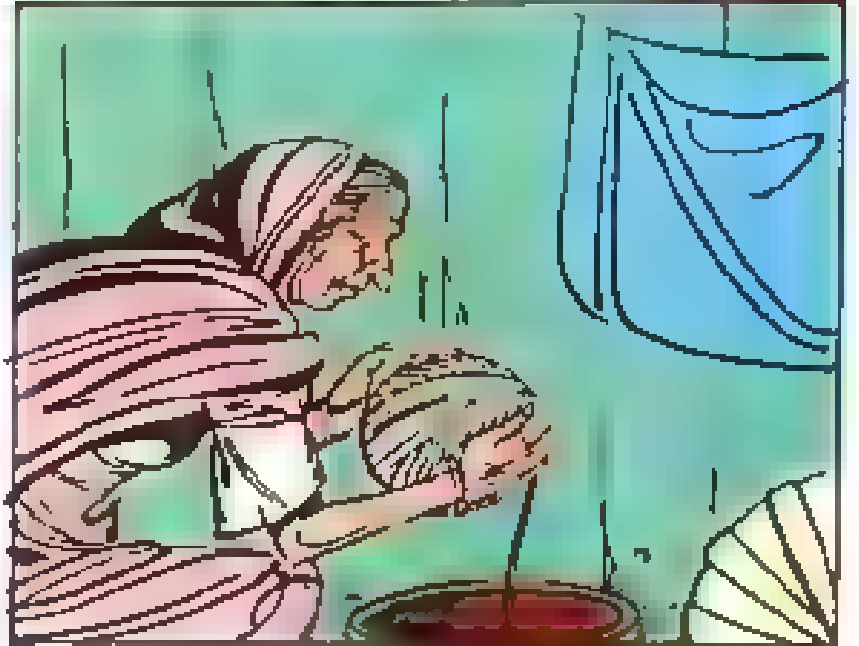
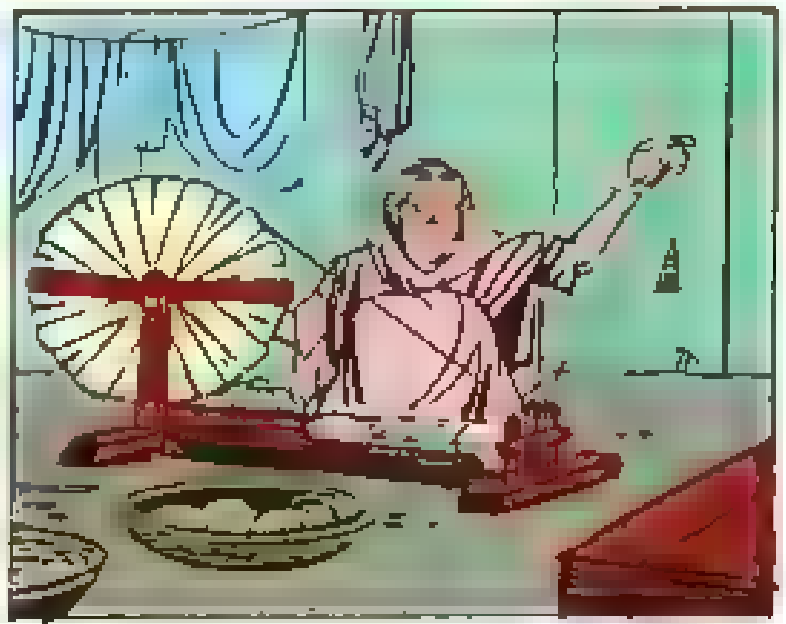


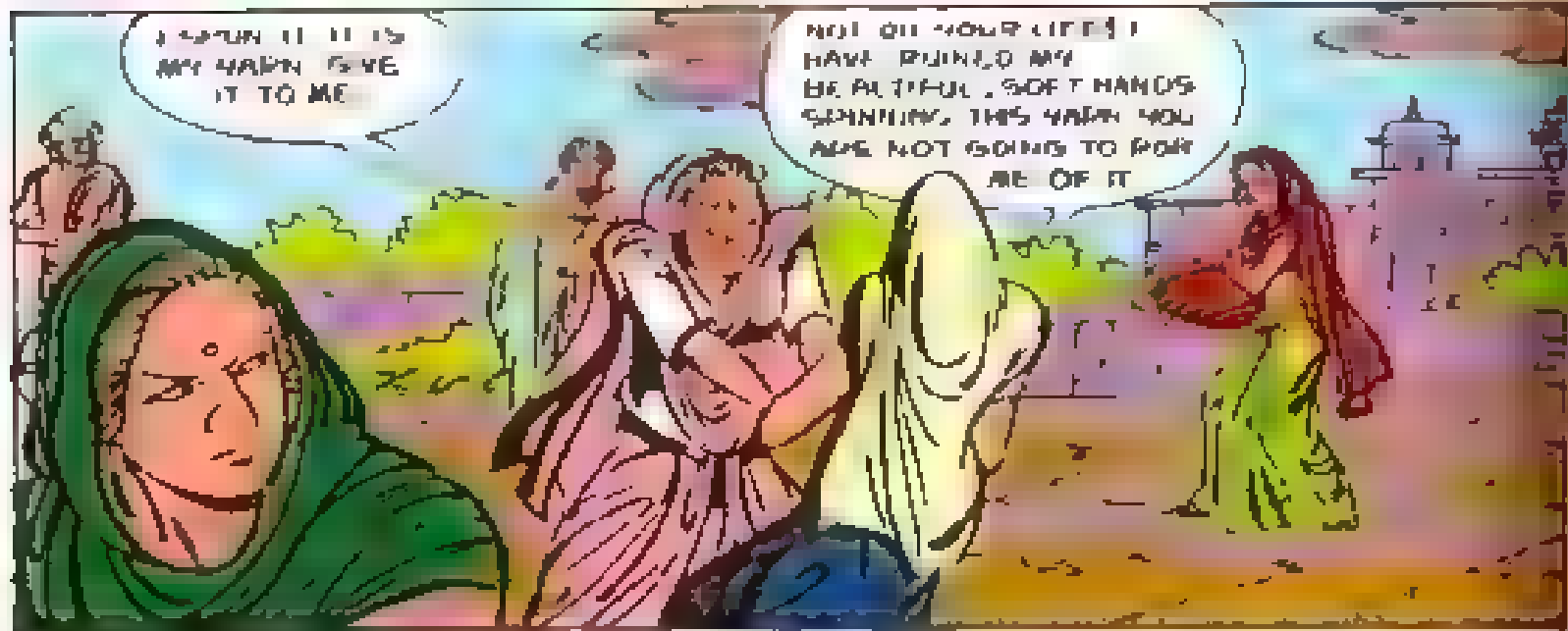
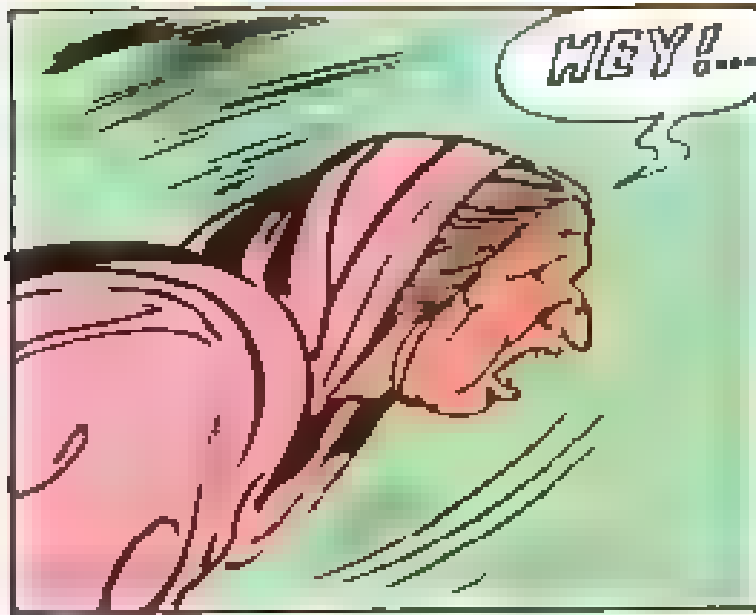
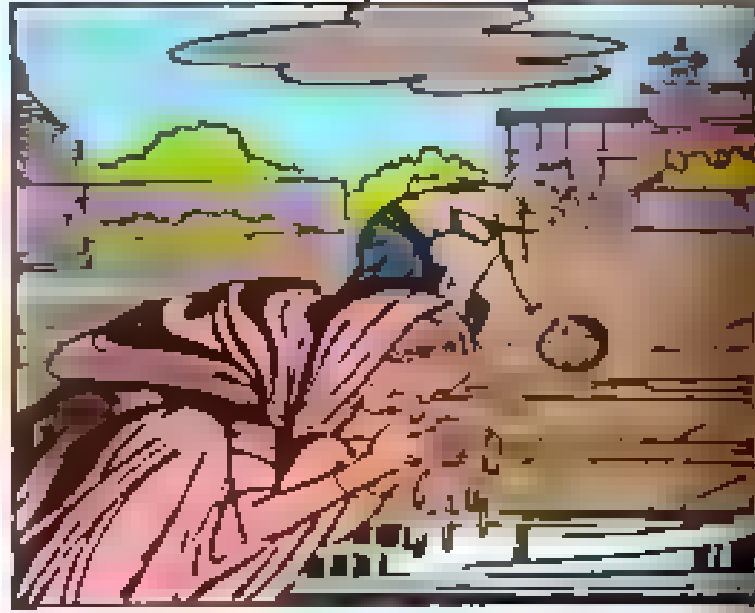
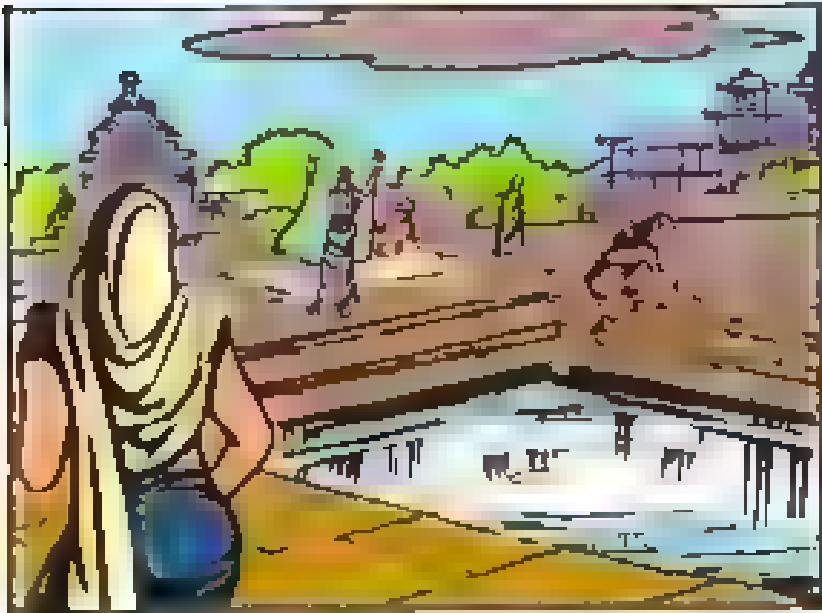
BUT WHEN THE TALE OF THE  
BULLOCK WAS NARRATED IN THE  
COURT OF VAIDEHA

MAHARAJA ANYONE  
WITH COMMON  
SENSE CAN SOLVE  
SUCH A  
PROBLEM

AND THE MINISTER WAS ASKED TO  
CONTINUE HIS VIGIL AT 'VAYAMBAHVAR'

A FEW DAYS LATER, THE CASE OF AN OLD  
WOMAN WORKING IN A COTTON FIELD  
PRESENTED THE MINISTER WITH YET ANOTHER  
INSTANCE OF ANUSHAKHA PUMAR'S WISDOM





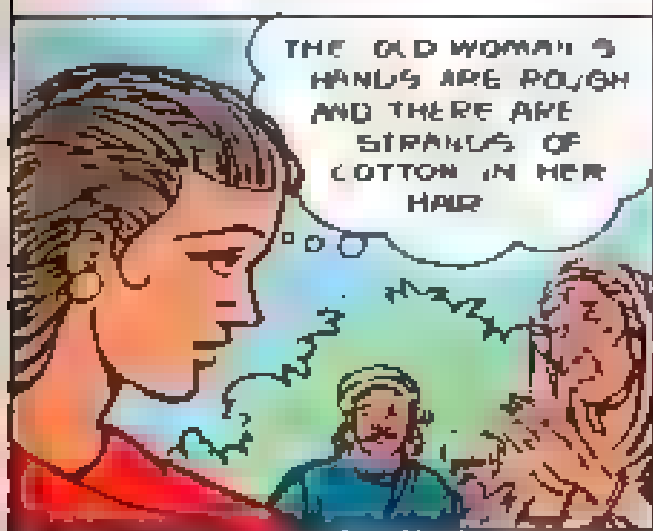
THE TWO WOMEN WERE BROUGHT TO RUSHADHA KUMAR



THE EVER ALERT MINISTER WATCHED THE PROCEEDINGS



RUSHADHA KUMAR STUDIED THE WOMEN CAREFULLY.

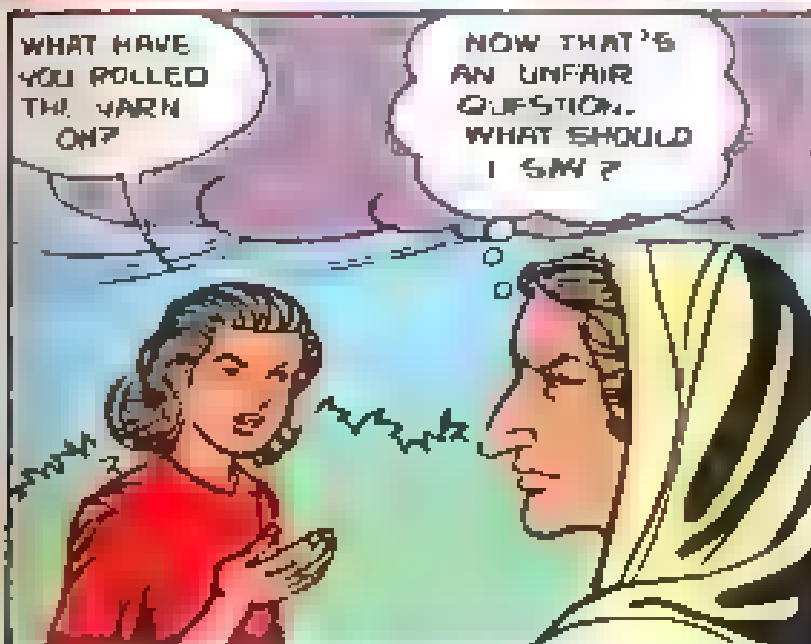


AND THIS WOMAN'S HANDS BETRAY THAT SHE BAPELY DOES ANY HARD WORK



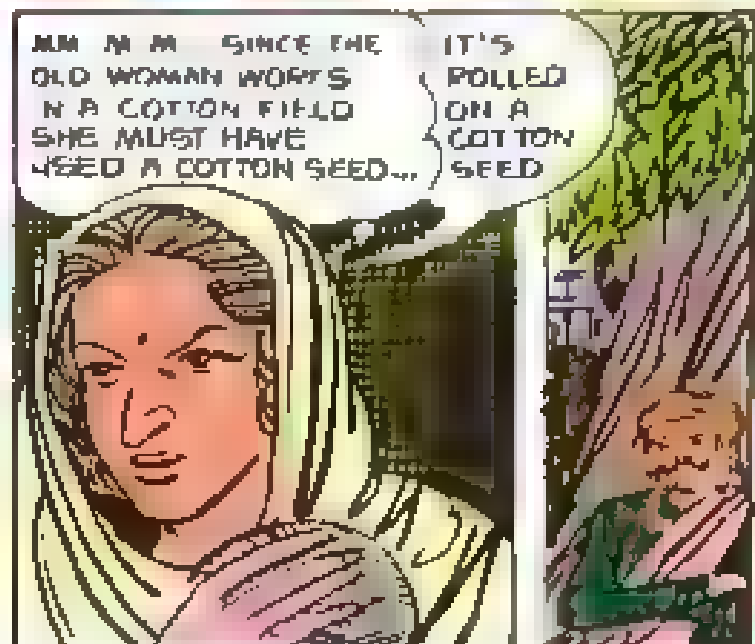
WHAT HAVE YOU ROLLED THE YARN ON?

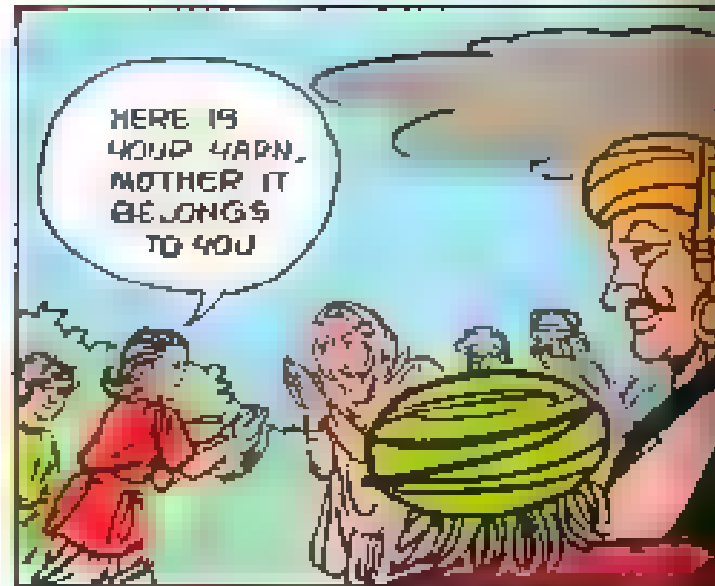
NOW THAT'S AN UNFAIR QUESTION. WHAT SHOULD I SAY?



MM MM SINCE THE OLD WOMAN WORKS IN A COTTON FIELD SHE MUST HAVE USED A COTTON SEED...

IT'S ROLLED ON A COTTON SEED





WHEN THE TALE REACHED MITHILA, THE PANDITS YET AGAIN REFUSED TO ADMIT THAT BUSHADHA KUMAR WAS ENDOWED WITH EXCEPTIONAL WISDOM





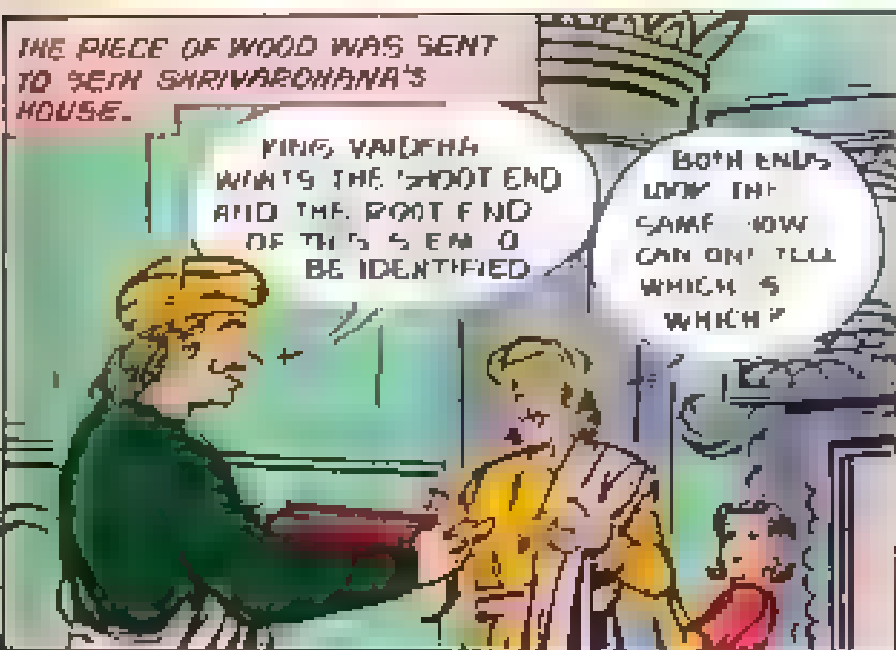
IN THIS MANNER ON SEVEN OCCASIONS WAS THE PRINCE'S OF MITHILA DISPUTE THE WISDOM OF AUSHADHA KUMAR TO STALL HIS INDUCTION INTO THE COURT. BUT VAIDEHA WAS TENACIOUS



HE HAD THE TAPERING STEM OF A SAPLING CUT AND SHAPED INTO A PERFECT CYLINDER

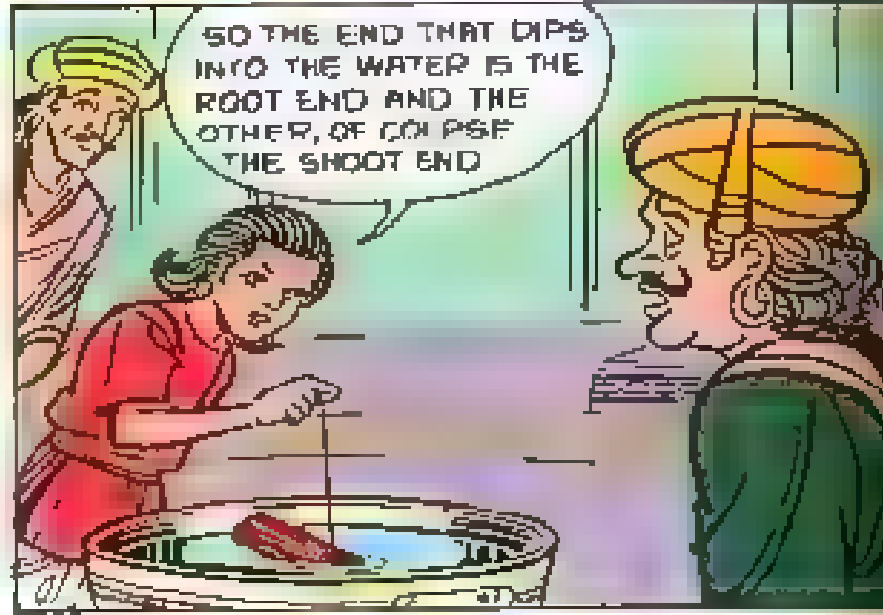
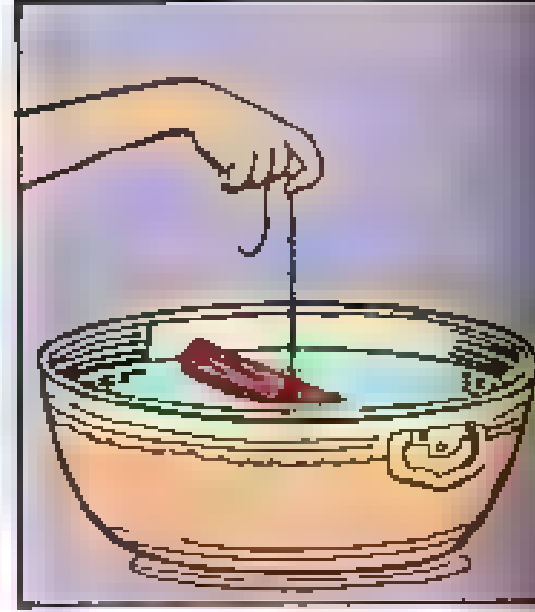


THE PIECE OF WOOD WAS SENT TO SEEN SHRIVARDHANA'S HOUSE.

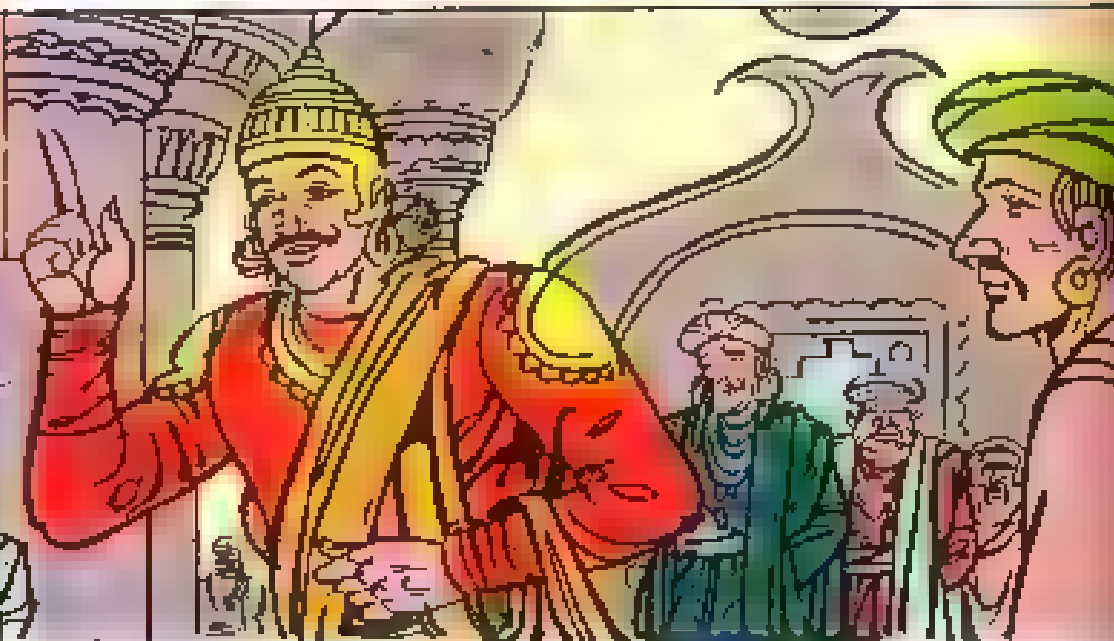
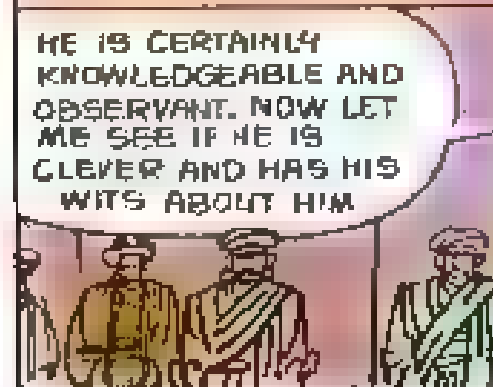


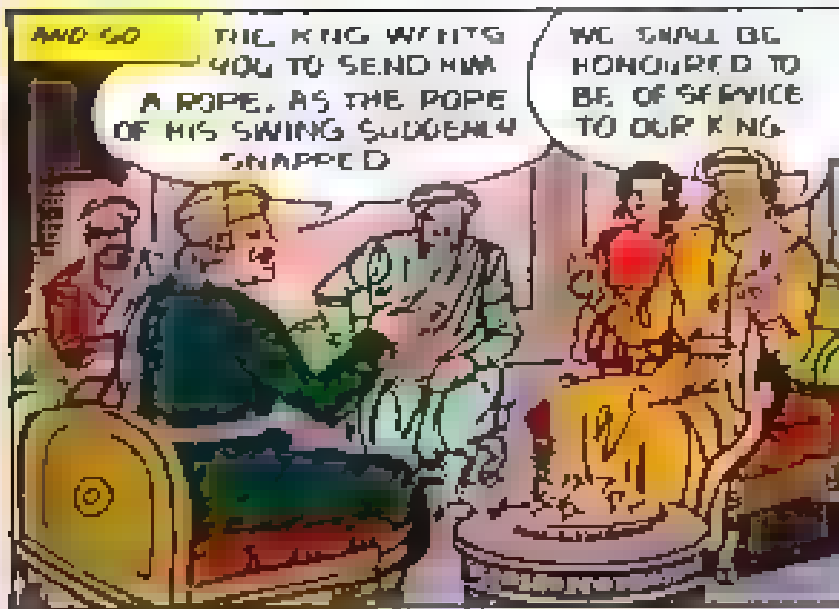
LET ME TRY





WHILE THE FOUR PRINCES  
WERE DOWNCAST BY THE  
RESULTS OF THE FIRST  
TEST, THE KING WAS  
DELIGHTED AUSHADHA HAD  
WON THE FIRST ROUND WITH  
FULL MARKS.





WHEN THE KING HEARD THE  
COUNTER DEMAND

REMARKABLE!  
THE BOY IS  
EXTRAORDINARY

KING VANDHA POSED SEVERAL SUCH COMPLEX  
PROBLEMS WHICH PUT AUSHADHA KUMAR'S  
WITS SEVERELY TO THE TEST. FINALLY -

AUSHADHA KUMAR  
IS BEYOND DOUBT  
A GREAT SOUL.  
I SHALL NOW  
INVITE HIM TO  
JOIN MY  
COURT

BUT,  
MAHARAJA...

NOW I SHALL  
GO AND FETCH  
THE GREAT  
PANDIT HERE  
MYSELF

NEXT MORNING, THE KING LEFT HIS CAPITAL  
FOR VAYAMANJHAKA.

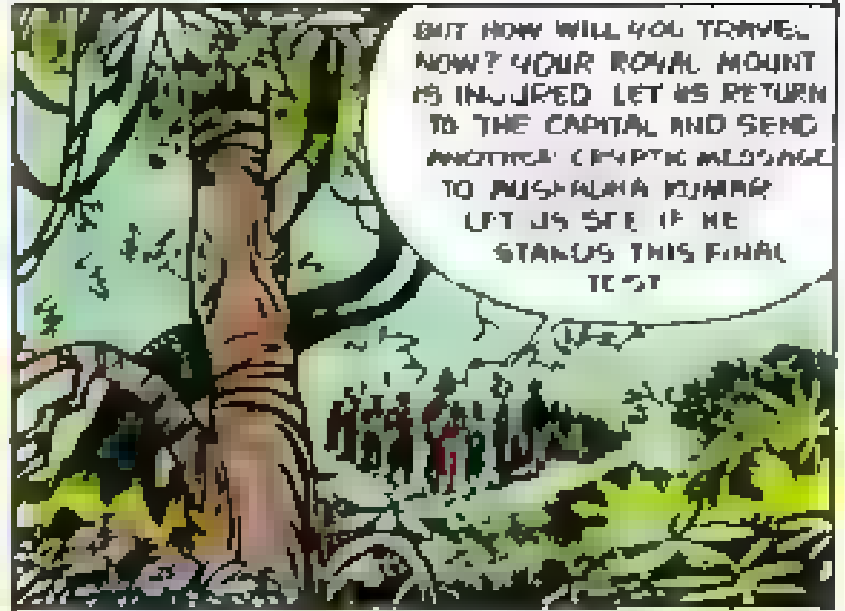
HOWEVER ON THE WAY -

THE HORSE  
HAS BROKEN  
ITS LEG

THIS IS A BAD  
OMEN, MAHARAJA.  
YOU SHOULD  
GIVE UP THE  
IDEA OF  
MEETING  
AUSHADHA KUMAR.



IT IS NOT A BAD  
OATH THE HORSE  
TRAPPED. I WILL NOT  
BE DEFERRED FROM  
MEETING  
RUSHADHA KUMAR  
JUST BECAUSE  
OF AN ACCIDENT



BUT HOW WILL YOU TRAVEL  
NOW? YOUR ROYAL MOUNT  
IS INJURED. LET US RETURN  
TO THE CAPITAL AND SEND  
ANOTHER CRYPTIC MESSAGE  
TO RUSHADHA KUMAR  
LET US SEE IF HE  
STANDS THIS FINAL  
TEST



SUN - THE ROYAL HORSE  
IS INJURED, SATH  
SHRIVARDHANNA  
PLEASE SEND A  
MULE OR ITS  
SUPERIOR FOR  
THE KING

WHAT KIND OF A DEMAND IS  
THIS? A MULE OR ITS  
SUPERIOR? SHALL WE SEND  
A LION? WHICH IS  
SUPERIOR TO THE MULE  
BY VIRTUE OF BEING  
ITS FATHER?



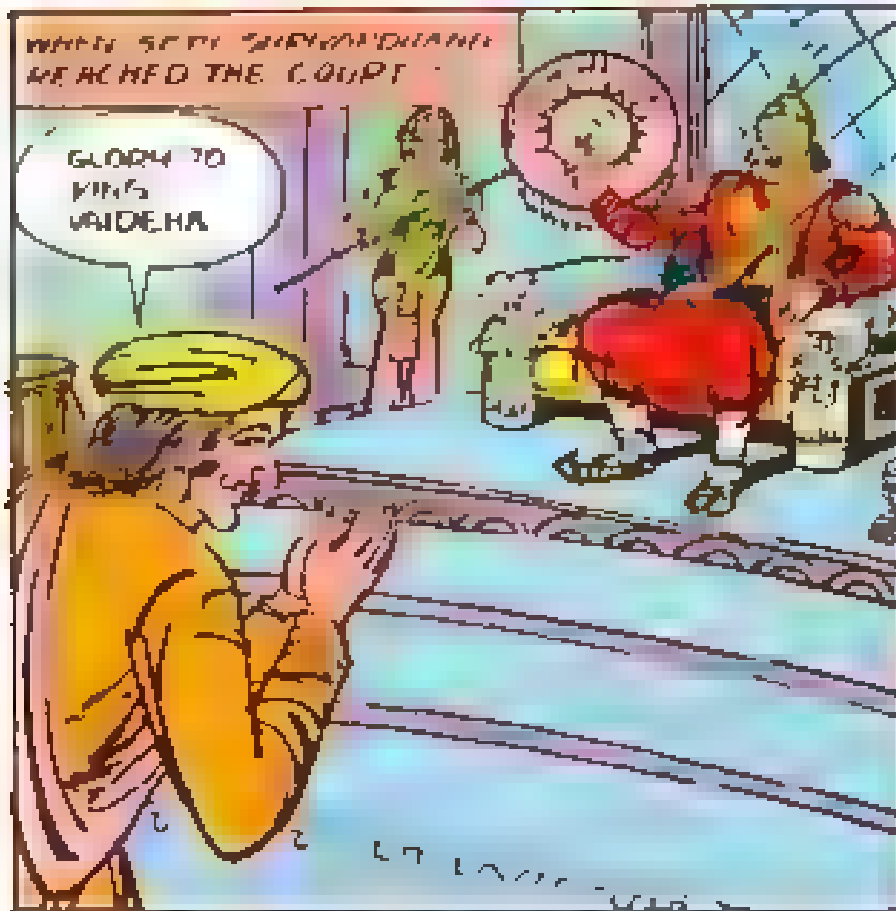
FATHER, IT IS  
NEITHER MULE NOR  
LIONKEY THAT THE  
KING WANTS, BUT  
YOU AND ME



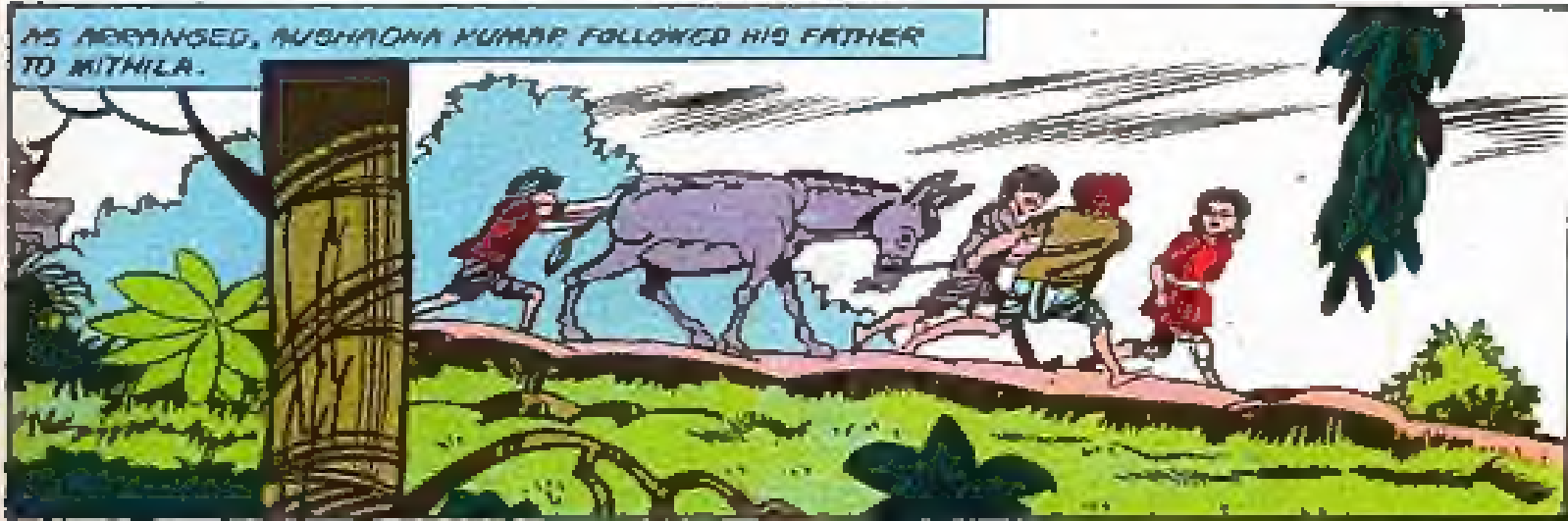
I MUST  
PUT AN END  
TO THIS  
BATTLE OF  
WITS

HOW WILL  
YOU DO THAT  
SON?





AS ARRANGED, MUSHADHA KUMAR FOLLOWED HIS FATHER TO MITHILA.



WHEN MUSHADHA KUMAR REACHED THE COURT —





